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Life and its Consequences

THE ATTEMPT ON HITLER'S LIFE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Description

The study analyzes the background of the attempt, the groups behind it and its consequences for the morale of the troops, the home front, and the post-hostilities period.

27 July 1944

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Summary and Conclusions

1. The attempt on Hitler's life was caused by the threatened annihilation of the field armies on the battlefield and the subordination of the Home (Reserve) Army to Himmler and the SS. The announcement, made one day before the attempt, that Himmler would assume command of the Home Army forced the conspirators' hand.

2. Differences in strategy between the Army and Hitler, and the growing friction between the SS and the Army, had renewed the antagonism between the Army and the Party which was outwardly overcome by the purge of Röhm in 1934.

3. There is no reason to doubt that an attempt on Hitler's life was made, all the more because it is certain that circles connected with Col. Gen. Ludwig Beck had approached the Allies to negotiate a separate peace.

4. Though the Nazis attribute the plot to a few generals only, some retired, and some active in the command of the Home Army, it is likely that the plot had ramifications among civilians.

5. The plotting group was drawn from those members of the German Officers' Corps who favored a Western Orientation; the plot expressed the desire of the German masses for peace, but did not represent a positive political

program for post-war Germany.

6. No matter how narrow the basis of the plot may have been, it will be used by the Nazis for a large-scale purge of opposition leaders in the armed forces, industry, and the civil service.

7. The purge is likely to be successful to the degree that it deprives the potential opposition of its leadership and leaves to chance the emergence of a new leadership. This leadership may not emerge before actual military defeat.

8. Nazi controls over the field and home armies likely will be tightened to such an extent that the Army will become, in practice, a Party affiliate.

Field commanders probably will continue to fight under the new leadership though they may liberally interpret military necessity compelling surrender. While the uplifting effects upon the morale of the soldiers will be merely temporary, the morale of the officer corps may deteriorate. As yet, however, there are no indications that the fighting spirit has been impaired.

9. The full concentration of powers over the home front in the hands of Nazis may lead to a radical simplification of the administrative machinery, possibly even to the substitution of the Party Kreisleiter and Gauleiter for mayors, rural councillors and provincial presidents. The Economic

Groups may be abolished and power over production may be vested exclusively in the Speer Committees. The nationalization of the means of production is unlikely.

10. The collapse of Germany may be retarded and the future formation of a centralized non-Nazi government for the purpose of surrendering, made difficult by the coup and the purge.

THE ATTEMPT ON HITLER'S LIFE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

I. THE BACKGROUND

A. Principles for the Evaluation of German Morale

An understanding of the political significance of the latest attempt on Hitler's life may be aided greatly by a recapitulation of principles for the evaluation of German morale. These principles have been evolved in a series of papers[1] and may be summarized as follows:

1. The ruling group in Germany is made up of four segments: Party hierarchy, Army leadership, industrial and financial leaders, and high civil servants.

2. In the course of the war, the political power of the industrial leadership and of the civil servants has diminished to such a degree that they can assert themselves only by attempting to influence either Party or Army.

3. Therefore, the Party and Army leaderships are the politically important factors of the ruling group.

4. Though the Army leadership is permeated by reliable Nazis, it still preserves an identity of its own.

5. Since the ruling group itself must make the political decisions its morale is determined by its own evaluation of the total political situation.

6. The morale of the subordinate strata is not conditioned by their thinking and feelings but rather by the institutional controls of Nazi society which compel the subordinate strata

1. The Ruling Class in Nazi Germany, PW Weekly, 23 July 1943.

to work and fight no matter what may be their attitudes toward war and Nazism.

7. There is no potentially powerful revolutionary movement from below, although underground organizations of considerable strength do exist. These can become active only if a coup d'etat paves the way for the destruction of the Nazi controls.

8. Such a coup could not be expected before the invasion. It can come only if the Army leadership fears the loss of the German Army, which it needs as the instrument for domestic control and political bargaining with foreign powers.

B. Party and Army

The retention of the generals' control over the Army is the key to the understanding of the plot. Without an army which is independent of the Nazi Party, the Army leadership and its allies -- industrialists, bankers, Junkers, and high civil servants -- cannot possibly play a role during the collapse and the post-war period. The Army leadership cannot count again upon a Social Democratic leadership which would entrust demobilization and reorganization of the Army to the old Officers' Corps, encourage the establishment of a Free Corps, and protect the Reichswehr from parliamentary control. If the generals lose Army control this time, they will be unable to exert any influence upon domestic developments or foreign policy.

It may be objected that these expectations of the generals are utterly without foundation, in view of the declared policy of the United Nations to destroy the German Army and

to demobilize Germany. It is true that the United Nations have stated formally this to be their policy. But there is little doubt that the German generals hope and will continue to hope[1] until the opposite is clearly demonstrated to them, that they can create differences between the USSR and the Western Powers and thereby retain at least the remnants of their instrument. With regard to the USSR, they see some hope in the Free Germany Committee and the German Officers' Union. They also may remember Stalin's statement of 21 October 1942, when he said that he desired only the destruction of the "Hitlerite army." The Army undoubtedly will continue to hope to bring about some understanding between Germany and the Western Powers against "the danger of Bolshevism," which it will present as the major danger to Europe.

Futile as these hopes may turn out to be, it is likely they influence and determine the outlook of the generals, just as they shaped the policies of Hindenburg, Gröner, Seeckt, Reinhardt, and Schleicher in the fateful days of 1918 and 1919.

The antagonism between Army and Party is of long standing. It first manifested itself on 30 June 1934, when Hitler purged Röhm and his group, which desired, broadly speaking, to transform the Army into an affiliate of the Party. On 30 June 1934, therefore, the Party was purged in order to maintain the organizational autonomy of the Army. In 1944

1. See also OSS Source #34017, 25 July 1944.

the Army was purged in order to save the Party. If Hitler had not purged the Party in 1934, the Army would have become a Party formation; but if he had tried to do so, the Officers' Corps would have tried to overthrow him even then. Thus 1934 was the decisive year for the Nazi Party, a year that sealed the fate of Nazism as a revolutionary movement.

But the same purge that preserved the Army's organizational independence led to its political decline. The purge was not confined to Röhm and his followers, but also included the two generals who had done most to preserve the army under the Weimar Republic -- von Schleicher and von Bredow. The Army leadership accepted this development and thereby subordinated itself to National Socialism. Step by step the influence of the conservative Officers' Corps was undermined, and subservient Army leaders took charge.

While this change tended to subordinate the Army politically, a new antagonism arose over the question of strategy. This difference was clearly brought out in a speech by Colonel General Ludwig Beck delivered in 1935 on the 125th anniversary celebration of the Military Academy.[1]

"It is the imperative demand that military questions should be traced back in their inner coherence to their origins in systematic intellectual labor, penetrating the problem step by step. That demand must be fulfilled, today more than ever before, by every one who desires to lead. Only its fulfillment can give the necessary basis for the responsibility, independence and initiative of the leader.

1. Quoted from H. Rosinsky, The German Army, Washington, 1944.

"Such systematic thought must be carefully learned and exercised. To that end above all these years at the Academy are meant to contribute. Nothing could be more dangerous than to follow sudden inspirations, however intelligent or brilliant they may appear, without pursuing them to the logical conclusions, or to indulge in wishful thinking, however sincere our purposes. We need officers capable of systematically following the path of logical argument with disciplined intellect to its conclusion, strong enough in character and nerve, to execute what the intellect dictates.

"The coup d'oeil, the so-called lightning-like grasp of a momentary situation, formerly so highly praised, can certainly continue to be of importance in many situations in land warfare. In general, however, it must be considered of less importance, at least in the higher regions of leadership, than an understanding of the situation matured out of an intellectual penetration endeavoring to exhaust all possibilities...."

This speech reveals, perhaps better than the history of the various campaigns, the profound differences in the strategic approach of the conservative generals and of Hitler. It is undoubtedly Hitler's strategy on the Eastern Front that has led to the annihilation of the German field army. This must have created an ever-growing antagonism between the Party and the generals, exemplified by the retirement of many leading generals (see appendix I) and supported by a huge number of intelligence reports (see also below page 7).

The attempt on Hitler's life can be understood best if it is assumed that the Army leadership is primarily concerned with the preservation of the Army as its instrument. Such a situation now prevails. The field army is exposed to annihilation on the battlefield. Every general officer likely

has realized since 6 June 1944 that nothing can prevent military defeat.

All that will remain to the army leadership is the Home (Reserve) Army. But the New York Times published on 20 July, one day before the attempted assassination, the statement that Himmler was to be appointed dictator of the Home Front and head of the Reserve Army, with the power to appoint and dismiss generals. Such a measure, which was decided upon long before the attempt on Hitler and thus was well known to the army officers, threatened to deprive the Army leadership of its control of the Home Army, consequently leaving the leadership without any bargaining power.

It is against this background -- threatened annihilation of the field army in battle and loss of control of the Home Army by subordination to the SS -- that the attempted coup may be analyzed.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE ATTEMPT

A. Friction between the SS and the Army

The impending transfer of the Home Army to Himmler explains the timing of the attempt. Indications of this are contained in Hitler's speech of 2 July 1944, delivered at the funeral of General Dietl, and Goebbels' article in Das Reich of 7 July, in which it was stated that the only danger to the Nazi regime lay in the home front. There were many more signs

of the growing antagonism between the Party and its SS and the Army, apart from the basic strategic differences. The Army allegedly had tried to establish "security posts" in bombed towns throughout Germany in order to counteract SS domination;[1] General von Falkenhausen and Colonel General Friedrich Dollmann were replaced by SS officers,[2] and the SS and SA apparently were destined to play the lion's part in Hitler's "People's war" at the hour of military defeat.[3]

Mounting instances of acute friction and counteraction between Army and SS commanders end, not infrequently, with the recall or the death of Army generals.[4] The reckless employment of SS troops, attributed to Army generals, particularly to Rundstedt,[5] was said to have resulted in demands by the SS for a greater, if not the dominant, share in military leadership.[6] Distrust by the SS of Army officers and demands for their dismissal were grounded in instances of defeatism among Army generals.

The coup also coincided with what appears to be the collapse of a German plan of defense, apparently a slow withdrawal from the East and firm resistance in the West, with the West maintaining strategic priority for the time being. Dittmar indicates that this strategy has been revised owing to the "unexpectedly rapid Soviet advance," so that to some extent the center of gravity thus once more will be

1. OSS #35739, 19 July 1944.
2. OSS #35770, 19 July 1944.
3. OSS Source S, 18 July 1944.
4. OSS #35770, 19 July 1944.
5. OSS #35919, 22 July 1944.
6. OSS #35739, 19 July 1944.

shifted to the East. According to secret reports,[1] a number of divisions from the strategic reserves have now been sent East, and more are promised.

It is quite possible that this newest change in strategy was unacceptable to those Army circles which have retained sufficient independence of judgment to recognize the handwriting on the wall.

Their action may be motivated by recognition that further sacrifice of troops entailed in this strategy would end in the complete destruction of German manpower, and of the German armies in particular. But it was the impending appointment of Himmler as dictator of the home front that forced the conspirators' hand.

B. The Peace Feelers of the Beck Group

It is also known that a group of Army generals attempted to establish contact with the Allies in order to negotiate a separate peace. It was clear, even at that time, that this peace feeler was made either with the connivance of the SS Security Service or that the Security Service was at least acquainted with it,[2] and allowed the generals to approach the Allies in order to get full knowledge of all the ramifications of the plot. It also may have been the threatened exposure of their activities which compelled the plotters to act. This is likely in view of the fact that Suendermann's statement to the foreign press seems to imply that General Beck was shot before the attempt on Hitler was made.[3]

1. OSS Daily, 18 July 1944.
2. OSS Source #33696, 21 July 1944.
3. The Germans asserted, however, on 27 July 1944, that Beck committed suicide. (See below).

C. The Identity of the Plotters

It is much more difficult to determine the identity of the plotters and their backers. The Nazi spokesmen endeavored to create the impression that "only a small clique of inconspicuous officers"[1] had made the attempt. Göring[2] narrows it down to "a miserable clique of former generals who had to be ousted...because of a leadership as cowardly as it was incompetent."

Very soon, however, emphasis was shifted from retired to active generals. The statement from Berlin to the European press admitted that active officers "holding important positions in the reserve"[3] were not only concerned in, but had actually inspired, the plot. Colonel General Heinz Guderian, the new Chief of Staff, finally laid the responsibility to a "few officers, some of them on the retired list,"[4] thereby admitting the majority were active officers. Goebbels finally laid responsibility[5] for the leadership of the plot on a colonel general, retired many years ago (apparently Beck) and another colonel general removed from the Eastern Front because of cowardice.[6]

1. According to Hitler, 21 July 1944.
2. FCC Daily Report, 21 July 1944, p. CCA 3.
3. FCC Daily Report, 22 July 1944, p. CCC 6.
4. New York Times, 24 July 1944.
5. New York Times, 27 July 1944.
6. The German radio identified today (27 July 1944) the following conspirators:
   Col. Gen. Ludwig Beck is said to have committed suicide.
   Col. Gen Erich Höpner is awaiting trial. Höpner, who was Chief of Staff to Field Marshal v. Rundstedt, was retired in 1942.
   General Friedrich Olbricht, Chief of the General Army office was court-martialled and shot.

The reasons for this change in emphasis are not hard to discover. The death or execution of active officers could not be hidden and had to be justified. As a consequence, their participation in the plot had to be established. According to German statements, therefore, the plot was confined exclusively to officers, namely, retired generals and members of the Home Command.

If Zeitzler really was among the plotters, he may have been planted there by the Nazis.[1] This would explain his temporary dismissal. To the list of those who were probably purged may be added the name of General Georg Thomas, Chief of the War Economy and Armament Office of the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces. Up to the time of Speer's ascendancy, Thomas was the key controller of the Nazi economy. Since 1942 he has continually lost power to Speer and his Armament Office was incorporated into the Speer Ministry, while Thomas himself has been made subject to Speer's orders. Thomas is the outstanding liaison officer between the Army and the leading industrialists.

Appendix I gives a list of the leading German generals who have been retired since 1938. Appendix II contains the names of the major officers in the Home Command. There is little doubt that General Beck participated in the preparation of the Putsch, although it is doubtful that he plotted the

1. OSS Source #33934, 24 July 1944, differs from this interpretation.

assassination of Hitler. Deputy Press Chief Suendermann's speech to the Foreign Press[1] seems to imply that he was shot before the attempt was made.

There is no hint in German statements that civilians were in any way involved in the Putsch and the attempted assassination. And yet this appears likely. The aim of the Putsch was not only the assassination of Hitler, but also the assumption of governmental powers by the plotters in order to surrender to the Western Powers. If this is assumed to be true -- and available intelligence supports this conclusion[2] -- civilians must have participated in the preparation of the Putsch. Without the active cooperation of leading civil servants, and possibly of industrialists, the generals could not have assumed control of the huge governmental machinery that is necessary to install a new national government. The fact that the Germans have not admitted the participation of civilians may mean either they are not cognizant of this (which is doubtful), or they are reluctant to admit the extent of the opposition to the regime. In addition, by mentioning only generals in connection with the plot, the Nazis made it possible to shift the burden of the defeat on the Eastern Front from Hitler's strategy to treason by Army officers. This point will be elaborated later.

1. FCC Daily Report, 21 July 1944, p. CCC 5.
2. OSS Source #35934, 24 July 1944.

D. The Political Character of the Conspiratorial Group

The members of the conspiratorial group did not represent a positive political program for Germany save on one point: surrender to the Western powers in order to save the Army. They clearly counted upon what they consider "natural affinities" between Germany and Western culture and society, fear of Russia, in spite of all declarations to the contrary, and aversion to a German revolution which may spread and infect Europe. The group thus "gambled on what they conceived to be latent intentions of the Western Powers and the 'hidden' antagonism between the Western Powers...." The group was "favorably disposed to the military occupation of Germany by the Western Powers."[1]

The group was probably drawn from those favoring the so-called Western Orientation of German foreign policy,[2] which was formulated most clearly by the late General Max Hoffmann[3] as against those favoring an Eastern Orientation (the late von Seeckt, von Brockdorff-Rantzau, von Kühlmann, and a large number of active generals).

But apart from its hope to sell itself to the West for what it believes to be the ultimately necessary war against the USSR, the group represented nothing except bankrupt generals, nationalist intellectuals, and (possibly) nationalistic Social Democrats and civil servants. This

1. All quotations from The Morale of the German Ruling Class, PW Weekly, 21 April 1944 pp. 11-12.
2. OSS Source 33696, 21 July 1944.
3. For details see The Free Germany Committee and the German People, OSS, 6 August 1943, pp. 12-14.

by no means implies that the group would not have found backing if it had succeeded in its Putsch. The desire for peace is believed to be so intense in Germany that any group, no matter how compromised, would have found almost universal acclaim if it succeeded in ending the war, though its power would have vanished rapidly once peace was declared. The extermination of the group thus does not impede the political regeneration of Germany.

III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ATTEMPT

A. The Purge of Opposition Leaders

No matter how narrow the basis of the plot may have been, there is little doubt that it will be the occasion for a large-scale purge of generals, former political leaders, and possibly of industrialists, bankers and high civil servants. One statement in the Goebbels speech of 26 July 1944[1] indicates that there is to be a wholesale purge. Goebbels, when reporting his instructions to the Commander of the Berlin Guard Batallion, Major Remer, added: "Immediately after the end of my speech officers and soldiers take up their machine pistols and rifles to get them ready to settle accounts."[2] Intensified attempts to exterminate the active or potential opposition were reported for some weeks prior to the attempt. These purges, of course, never were publicized. The generals' plot provides the opportunity of carrying out large-scale purges which could not possibly be hidden from the German people, but which can now not only be brought into the open but even given a convincing and rational justification.

Though it is likely that the purge will affect equally the members of the Western and Eastern orientation within the Officers' Corps, the influence of the Easterners undoubtedly will increase. This is due to two factors. The Eastern

1. New York Times, 27 July 1944.
2. Italicized by the author.

orientation has many more adherents, especially in view of the influence of the late General von Seeckt. Besides, in the Free Germany Committee and the German Officers' Union, the Easterners already possess a rather strong organization abroad, staffed with well-known officers (see appendix III). This fact, together with the possible rise of Communist movements in the post-hostilities period (see below), is likely to cause an Eastern orientation of important strata in the German people unless the post-hostilities policy of the USSR is held primarily responsible for the deprivations of Germany.

To some extent, the pattern of 30 June 1934 likely will be repeated. The 1934 pattern means that the Nazi leadership will publicly admit only a very limited purge while it actually will attempt to exterminate all those who could possibly organize resistance. The purge by no means will necessarily be confined to army officers and the potential revolutionary opposition.[1]

There are, of course, very good reasons why the Nazi leadership cannot possibly admit that the plot has broad ramifications. To do so would be to admit the instability of the regime, and thus, while Germany is enduring one military defeat after another, to invite mutinies and desertion. The tightness of domestic controls will prevent the people from learning the extent of the purge (years passed before the seriousness of the 1934 purge was known in Germany -- if it is known even now).

1. There are already reports of the execution of Schacht, von Neurath, and members of the Stauffenberg family.

Each local incident of the purge thus can remain isolated and justifiable, and the picture presented by the Nazis (a plot confined to a few) may thus be believed.

B. The Success of the Purge

Has opposition, actual and potential, now been purged effectively? This question cannot be answered with certainty, since two major factors are unknown: The strength of the opposition and the extent of the purge. But it is safe to assume that the rise of a new opposition within the Army leadership has been made much more difficult, while the joining of industrialists and high bureaucrats is now unlikely in view of the fear that the purge is likely to create among this group. Even those who have considered joining a Putsch are now likely to submit declarations of loyalty. They will probably avoid even the slightest indication of a conspiratorial spirit.

On the other hand, it is impossible to annihilate the potential opposition without crippling the army, state, and industrial machines in so doing. There can be no doubt that the high Officer Corps and many high civil servants and industrialists are overwhelmingly conservative, though their great majority is non-political in the sense that it merely obeys the orders of a duly constituted central authority. Had the coup been successful, the bulk of the high Officer Corps, civil servants and industrialists would have been likely to follow the new leadership. As the situation now stands, this potential reservoir of opposition has been deprived of a

leadership which alone would have been capable of transforming oppositional feelings into concerted action.

At the same time, it must be kept in mind that without a previously successful army coup, no successful revolution from below could have been expected.

C. The Effects on Army Morale

The outcome of the coup and purge is the tightening of Nazi controls over the armed forces, which probably will now lose their identity and become, so to speak, an affiliate of the Nazi Party. Symbolic of this is the imposition of the Nazi salute on the armed forces. The Reserve Army seems destined to be thoroughly Nazified. It was, in the Wehrkreise (corps areas), commanded by older and often re-activated generals who were strongly imbued with the traditional spirit of conservatism[1] and constituted the most powerfully entrenched army bureaucracy. They likely are to be removed and probably will be replaced by the Higher SS and Police Leaders whose jurisdiction tallies with that of the Wehrkreise.

What will the reaction of the remaining officers be? It is most likely that they will continue to fight -- with the one reservation mentioned below.

There are a number of reasons for this:

The first is inherent in the pattern of army organization and in the army tradition. Rebellion of the army against civil authority is, of course, the exception. Very few officers have the courage to risk their lives in this way; the great

1. Names and rank in Order of Battle of the German Army, February 1944 (MID), pp. 25-49.

majority fights as long as a central authority exists and orders it to fight. The central authority not only exists but is now outwardly stronger than before. Considerations of pure self-interest must not be forgotten. German officers have increasingly become civil servants eager for promotion and anxious for pensions.

The second question is whether field commanders will surrender with their army units before the military situation compels them to do so. This appears unlikely. This view is based on the case of General Hoffmeister, recently captured by the Russian army. It seems clear that Hoffmeister had either some kind of contact with the Free Germany Committee and the German Officers' Union at Moscow or was acquainted previously with the aims of the Moscow organization. It is evident from his broadcast to the German army in the East that he was genuinely critical of Hitler's strategy and was in complete opposition to his leadership. And yet his broadcast reveals clearly that in spite of his probable contact with the Seydlitz group, and in spite of his opposition to the personal strategy of Hitler, he fought until the military situation compelled his surrender. Military honor and tradition thus will make it unlikely that generals will surrender except under military necessity.

But the coup and the purge are most likely to influence their estimate as to what "military necessity" is. Prior to the coup, the generals fought bitterly because the whole army leadership appeared united in the determination to fight to

1. New York Times, 20 July 1944.

the finish. Now it is being demonstrated to them that Germany's outstanding military leaders -- whose patriotism, experience, and skill are beyond doubt -- have abandoned hope and have admitted that nothing, save a miracle, can avert complete military disaster for Germany. They may now come to believe that their own contribution to the fight matters little, and they may now interpret the term "military necessity" rather liberally and surrender without putting up a last-ditch fight.

It is difficult to judge whether the morale of the Army has been adversely affected, or will be impaired within the near future. The common soldier may actually experience a certain upswing. He may even believe that the defeat in the East was due to treason rather than faulty German strategy and Russian superiority. If this is his reaction, then he will be compelled to revise his views if he is ordered to withdraw further.

In the Officers' Corps, the number of Nazis among the junior officers is very high, but is fairly small in the upper ranks. The coup and purge unquestionably will impair morale. The uncertainty about the ramifications of the plot is likely to create distrust among the Officers' Corps; fear of denunciation will grow, and initiative will be further crippled because responsible commanders will shrink from any strategic and tactical decision not approved by the Party, lest it be attributed to a treasonable spirit.

There are, however, no indications as yet that the fighting spirit has been impaired, though the Nazis tend to create this impression. Lt. Gen. Dittmar's talk[1] attributes the defeat in the East at least partly to treason. "We are," he said, "far from wanting to deduce the development of the situation in the East only[2] from detrimental influences exerted by the traitors...For that their circle was too small and its import on the whole organization of the army not great enough." The dilemma of Nazi propaganda is clearly revealed here. Part of the blame for the defeats is shifted from Hitler's strategy to the plotters, but the whole responsibility cannot be attributed to them without admitting wide and deep ramifications of the plot.

D. Consequences for the Home Front

The direct consequence of the abortive coup is the full concentration of all powers in the hands of the triumvirate of Himmler, Göring, and Goebbels as manifested by Hitler's edict of 26 July 1944.[3] Further labor mobilization will deprive the civilian population of even the barest conveniences, will make it impossible to replace even the most primitive objects destroyed by air warfare. Many administrative offices are likely to be closed, the Economic Groups may be dissolved, and

1. FCC Daily Report 26 July 1944, p.H 4.
2. Emphasis supplied.
3. Text in New York Times, 26 July 1944.

sole responsibility for war production may be given to Speer's Committees and Rings. This is probable in view of the praise which Goebbels heaped on Speer.[1] The ascendance of the Gauleiter over the traditional administrative agencies may culminate in the complete abolition of many administrative bodies. It is likely that Kreisleiter will become mayors and Landräte, and such offices as that of the provincial presidents may be replaced simply by the Gau administration.

Though Goring and Goebbels appear to share power with Himmler, they are, in reality, his subordinates and it will be their duty merely to implement his decisions on policy.

Will Himmler aim at nationalization of the means of production? Will he try to institute a system of National Communism in order to stimulate production? This appears unlikely. Himmler and the SS long since have ceased to attack industrialists. The Speer organization and the Göring combine are permeated with SS leaders who have close links with business.[2] Robert Ley referred to the plotters as "German counts," "criminal members of the nobility" and to the "reaction"[3] but made no mention of industrialists and bankers. Besides, it would be disastrous to undertake a large-scale program of economic reorganization at a time when every ounce of manufactured war material counts. All that can be expected, therefore, is a radical elimination of many administrative control agencies.

1. New York Times, 27 July 1944.
2. The Ruling Class in Germany, op. cit.
3. FCC Daily Report, 25 July 1944, pp. CCB 3/4.

Large-scale expropriations can only be expected as a last desperate attempt to organize a levée en masse for which the enthusiastic approval of the worker would be needed.

E. The Pattern of German Collapse

The coup and purge are likely to change the pattern of collapse. This aspect exceeds the scope of this paper and therefore will be treated very briefly:

It has heretofore been assumed[1] that fighting is not likely to take place on German soil because generals leading a successful Putsch would depose the Nazi leadership and sue for peace. This now appears less likely. It can now be assumed that the Nazi leadership is committed to a fight to the finish and will not hesitate to make Germany a battlefield. But it is doubtful whether this will be possible.

It is questionable that the Nazi leadership will be successful in achieving its three major tasks:

To prepare and execute an orderly retreat;

To keep the masses of workers from striking;

To prevent the surrender of army corps commanders with their armies once this state of the war is reached.

Tentatively, the following development may be envisaged when German territory is invaded in the West and East, or if in the East, large-scale inroads are made on German territory, strikes are likely to break out.

1. The Process of German Collapse R & A No, 7477, 4 December 1943.

It is doubtful that they can be suppressed. These strikes may not be revolutionary, but merely defeatist. The armies will try either to hurry home or, if obstacles exist, surrender without centralized command. There will then be no central authority unless the Nazi government itself surrenders and Germany will be in a state of chaos.

The consequences of the abortive coup may well be the rise of National Bolshevist movements in the post-hostilities period.[1] The problem which the Nationalist movement faced in 1918 and 1919 will arise again. To the genuine Nationalist youth in Germany, the solution of the problem after the defeat of National Socialism will be very different from what it was after 1918. The Nationalist groups may point to the enormous internal and external strength of the USSR. They may attribute this strength to the fact that the bourgeoisie has been eliminated in Russia and that, while the Nazis talk about the People's community, the Russians have established it by the extermination of their own industrialists, bankers, Junkers and middle classes. These groups, therefore, may attempt to ally themselves with the German working classes, hoping to swing them in a Nationalistic direction. They may strive to bring about a reconciliation of Nationalism and Communism and orient their policy towards an understanding with Russia, hoping that with Russia's backing Germany can be restored to the position of a great power.

1. For details see The Free Germany Manifesto and the German People, R & A, 6 August 1943, pp. 6-12.

APPENDIX X

Leading German Generals Retired Since 1938[1]

Name	Year Retired
Beyer, Paul	1944
v. Busse, Hans	1944
v. Blomberg, Werner	1938
Blumentritt	(?)
v. Bock, Fedor	1942
Bock (G.D. Inf.)	1943
Brandt, Georg	1943
v. Brauchitsch, Walther	1941
Busch, Ernst	1944
Cochenhausen, Friedrich	1942
v. Dalwigk zu Lichtenfels, Franz	1943
Fahrmbacher, Wilhelm	1944
v. Falkenhausen, Alexander	1944
Fessmann, Ernst	1942
Fromm, Fritz	1944
Geyer, Hermann	1942
Geyr v. Schweppenburg, Leo	1944
v. Greiff, Kurt	1943
Halder, Franz	1942
Halm, Hans	1942
Hoepner, Erich	1942
Kaupisch, Leonard	1942
v. Kleist, Ewald	1944
v. Kuechler, Georg	1944
v. Leeb, Wilhelm	1942
List, Wilhelm	1941
Luedke, Erich	1942
v. Madgensen, Eberhard	1944
v. Manstein, Erich	1944
v. Manteuffel, Hasso	1944
Mortitsch	(?)
Metz, Hermann	1942
Muff, Wolfgang	1943
v. Niebelschuetz, Guenther	1944
v. Niedermayer, Oscar	1942
Osswald, Erwin	1943
Oster, Hans	1944
Otto, Paul	1943
Petri, Hans	1942
v. Pogrell, Guenther	1941
v. Prager, Karl	1942
v. Puttkamer, Alfred	1942
Rabenau, Friedrich	1943
v. Rundstedt, Gerd	1944
Ruoff, Richard	1943
Schaller-Kalide, Hubert	1943
Schniewind, Rudolf	1942
v.d. Schulenburg, Winfred	1944
Schwandtner, Maximilian	(?)
Schweikhard, Carl	(?)
v. Sponeck, Hans	1942
Steppuhn, Albrecht	1942
Strauss, Adolf	1942
Streccius, Alfred	1943
Ulex, Wilhelm	1942
v. Vollard-Bockelberg	1942
Wachenfeld, Edmund	1943
Waeger, Alfred	1944
Weyer, Peter	1944
v. Wietersheim, Gustav	1942
v. Witzleben, Erwin	1942
Woellwarth, Erich	1942

1. Includes every retired full general or higher ranking general officer, but only a few outstanding officers of lower grade, General-Leutenants or General-Majors.

SECRET

APPENDIX II

Chief Officers of the Home Reserve Command

Col. Gen. Fritz Fromm, Chief of Army Equipment and Commander of the Replacement Training Army

subordinated are:

Gen. of Inf. Friedrich Olbricht, Chief of General Army Office

Gen. of Eng. Walter Kuntze, Chief of Training in the Repl. Tr. Army

Gen. of Art. Emil Leeb, Chief of Army Ordnance (brother of G.F. Marshal Wilh. v. Leeb)

Gen. of Art. Osterkamp, Chief of Army Administration Office

Appendix III. HIGHER OFFICERS IN THE GERMAN OFFICERS' UNION AND/OR THE FREE GERMANY COMMITTEE

Bamler, Rudolf (GLt)

x Bechler, Bernhard (Maj)

x Bechli, Gerhard (LCol)

x Bredt, Alfred (LCol)

Conrady, Alexander (GMaj)

x v. Daniels-Spangenberg, Maximilian (LtGen)

Engel.....(GMaj)

v.Erdmannsdorff, Gottfried (MGen)

x v. Frankenberg & Proschlitz (Maj)

Gihr (GMaj)

Gollwitzer, Friedrich (GLt)

Hoffmeister, Edmund (GLt)

x v.Huven, Hans Guenther (Col)

Klemm, Kuno (GMaj)

x Korfes, Dr. Otto (GMaj)

x Kurr, Walter (Col)

x Lattmann, Martin (GArt)

x v.Lenski, Arno (GLt)

x Litzmann, Louis (LCol)

v.Luetzow, Kurt Juergen

Michaelis.....(GMaj)

Mueller, Ludwig (LtGen-12.AC, act'g 4th Army)

Mueller-Buelow.....(GMaj)

Schmidt, Hans (GMaj)

x v.Seydlitz, Walter (Gen.d.Art)

x Steidel, Luitpold (Col)

v.Steinkeller, Friedr. Carl (GMaj)

Traut, Hans (GLt)

Trowitz.....(GMaj)

Voelckers, Paul (GdInf.)

x Members of Union.
Signers of Appeal of 25 July.